

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02
SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PA-01
/070 W

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R 171030Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
SECSTATE WASHDC 1846
INS WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 8210

FOL TEL SENT ACTION IMMEDIATE BANGKOK INFO PRIORITY VIENTIANE
FROM UDORN DATED MARCH 16, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L UDORN 0068

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF TH LA
SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF REFUGEES FROM PROVINCIAL DETENTION
CENTER TO NONG KHAI CAMP

REF: UDORN 0066

1. CONREP VISITED PROVINCIAL DETENTION CENTER IN NONG
KHAI MARCH 16 WHERE HE MET PROVINCE IMMIGRATION
OFFICER AND DETENTION CENTER OFFICIALS.
2. THESE SOURCES TOLD CONREP THAT IN RESPONSE TO
DIRECTIVE ISSUED BY GOVERNOR CHAMNAN POTCHANA'S OFFICE
MARCH 15, THEY ARE PLANNING TO TRANSFER AT LEAST 620
OF THE DETENTION CENTER'S INHABITANTS, CURRENTLY
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NUMBERING 1382, TO NONG KHAI REFUGEE CAMP MARCH 17.

3. DETAINEES TO BE TRANSFERRED WILL CONSIST OF TWO
GROUPS. FIRST GROUP IS 220 NEW HMONG REFUGEES WHO ARE
UNDER "SPONSORSHIP" OF UNHCR AND HAVE RELATIVES IN
NONG KHAI CAMP. OUR SOURCES STATED THAT DEFINITION OF
RELATIVES FOR HMONGS IS BEING INTERPRETED LIBERALLY.

HMONGS WILL BE ADMITTED TO CAMP AS PERMANENT RESIDENTS.

4. SECOND GROUP IS APPROXIMATELY 400 LOWLAND LAO WHO ALSO HAVE RELATIVES IN NONG KHAI CAMP. HOWEVER, THESE RELATIVES MUST SUBMIT FORMAL PETITIONS ON BEHALF OF DETAINEES WHICH ARE VERIFIED BY CAMP OFFICIALS AND COMPILED INTO A LIST REQUIRING GOVERNOR CHAMNAN'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL.

5. SOURCES ALSO REPORT THAT LOWLAND LAO DETAINEES SCHEDULED TO BE MOVED INTO CAMP WILL NOT ENJOY PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS ACCORDED TO HMONGS. THES WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR NEW HOUSING AND MUST RESIDE IN LIVING SPACE OF RELATIVES WHO PETITIONED FOR THEM.

6. OUR SOURCES ADD THAT THEY EXPECT ADDITIONAL TRANSFERS OF HMONG AND LOWLAND LAO DETAINEES TO NONG KHAI CAMP IN FUTURE.

7. COMMENT: GOVERNOR CHAMNAN'S INSTRUCTIONS TO MOVE SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF DETAINEES INTO REFUGEE CAMP IS WELCOME NEWS. IT WILL SERVE TO SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE EXTREME CROWDEDNESS IN DETENTION CENTER. HIS ACTION MAY HAVE BEEN SPURRED IN PART BY VISIT OF UNHCR DIRECTOR GOODYEAR AND SENIOR MOI OFFICIALS WHO ARE SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN NONG KHAI MARCH 17. CONREP REPORTS THAT
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IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS ARE WORKING FEVERISHLY TO ATLEAST HWVE TRANSFER OF DETAINEES UNDERWAY BEFORE VISITORS ARRIVE.

8. ONE SOUR NOTE ABOUT THIS DEVELOPMENT IS APPARENT DECISION NOT TO GRANT PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS TO LOWLAND LAO DETAINEES TRANSFERRED INTO REFUGEE CAMP. FORCING THEM TO LIVE IN HOUSING ALREADY ALLOTTED TO RELATIVES CAN ONLY ADD TO GROWING CONGESTION IN LAO SECTION OF CAMP. OUR SOURCES POINT OUT THAT TECHNICALLY SPEAKING LAO DETAINEES ADMITTED TO CAMP WILL STILL BE SUBJECT TO REPATRIATION. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT AS A PRACTICAL MATTER IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THEY WILL BE SENT BACK TO LAOS AGAINST THEIR WILL.
FINNEY

UNQUOTE
WHITEHOUSE

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